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## **Hickenlooper opposes Pinon Canyon growth**

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**By NICK BONHAM  
THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN**

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If residents of Southeastern Colorado don't support the expansion of the Army's Pinon Canyon training facility, gubernatorial candidate John Hickenlooper said Saturday he doesn't support the expansion either.

"With the way (the expansion) was presented, I'm a 'No,' " the Denver mayor said in an interview before the Pueblo Democratic party's St. Patrick Day's fundraiser, held at the Union Depot.

"Unless there is a deal embraced by the residents of Southeastern Colorado that they feel is better for their community, it's hard for me to support it. I don't think the military is so foolish that they want one part of the community to thrive at the expense of another."

Hickenlooper is running against Republican Scott McInnis, who supports the military's position on site expansion.

Hickenlooper, dressed in an Irish-green blazer, said he's not anti-military. "There is no reason why this state shouldn't be incredibly pro-military," he said.

Part of his campaign will be to visit farmers and ranchers in Las Animas County who live around the site.

"Hearing their side, hearing what their specific issues are and seeing if there's any kind of solution that addresses" the expansion is a priority, Hickenlooper said.

Despite being an urban mayor, Hickenlooper said he should appeal to rural voters because of his agricultural roots that trace to his grandparents, who were farmers. When he was a restaurant owner, he bought from Colorado food producers.

"What the agricultural community needs is a governor who can be a salesman and who can

actually promote their products, and not just in-state. That creates the value of what they produce," he said.

Through his business background and his six years as mayor of Denver, Hickenlooper said he's well versed in economic development, business growth, the workings of government and teamwork.

"It's about surrounding yourself with talent, making sure what everyone is supposed to get done, what their time line is, having a way of being transparent and holding everyone accountable. It's creating a real team. Isn't that what the governor's supposed to do — bring the whole state together?"

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